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JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 2. Jurisdiction of this court arises pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(d), which states that such actions may be brought and heard before "any appropriate United States district court without regard to the amount in controversy," and 28 U.S.C. § 1331 grants this court original jurisdiction of all civil actions arising under the laws of the United States.
- 3. Defendant conducts business in the State of California and therefore, personal jurisdiction is established.
 - 4. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2).
 - 5. Declaratory relief is available pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 and 2202.

PARTIES

- 6. Plaintiff is a natural person residing in Los Angeles, California, 90024.
- 7. Plaintiff is a "consumer" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(3) and is a "debtor" as defined by Cal. Civ. Code §1788.2(h).
- 8. Defendant is a national debt collection company with corporate headquarters located at 6330 Gulfton Drive, Houston, TX 77081.
- 9. Defendant is a "debt collector" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(6), and RFDCPA, Cal. Civ. Code §1788.2(c).
- 10. Defendant acted through its agents, employees, officers, members, directors, heirs, successors, assigns, principals, trustees, sureties, subrogees, representatives, and insurers.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

- 11. The Fair Debt Collection Practices Act ("FDCPA") is a comprehensive statute, which prohibits a catalog of activities in connection with the collection of debts by third parties.

 See 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq. The FDCPA imposes civil liability on any person or entity that violates its provisions, and establishes general standards of debt collector conduct, defines abuse, and provides for specific consumer rights. 15 U.S.C. § 1692k. The operative provisions of the FDCPA declare certain rights to be provided to or claimed by debtors, forbid deceitful and misleading practices, prohibit harassing and abusive tactics, and proscribe unfair or unconscionable conduct, both generally and in a specific list of disapproved practices.
- 12. In particular, the FDCPA broadly enumerates several practices considered contrary to its stated purpose, and forbids debt collectors from taking such action. The substantive heart of the FDCPA lies in three broad prohibitions. First, a "debt collector may not engage in any conduct the natural consequence of which is to harass, oppress, or abuse any person in connection with the collection of a debt." 15 U.S.C. § 1692d. Second, a "debt collector may not use any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt." 15 U.S.C. § 1692e. And third, a "debt collector may not use unfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect any debt." 15 U.S.C. § 1692f. The FDCPA is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous collectors, whether or not there exists a valid debt, broadly prohibits unfair or unconscionable collection methods, conduct which harasses, oppresses or abuses any debtor, and any false, deceptive or misleading statements in connection with the collection of a debt.
- 13. In enacting the FDCPA, the United States Congress found that "[t]here is abundant evidence of the use of abusive, deceptive, and unfair debt collection practices by many

debt collectors," which "contribute to the number of personal bankruptcies, to marital instability, to the loss of jobs, and to invasions of individual privacy." 15 U.S.C. § 1692a. Congress additionally found existing laws and procedures for redressing debt collection injuries to be inadequate to protect consumers. 15 U.S.C. § 1692b.

14. Congress enacted the FDCPA to regulate the collection of consumer debts by debt collectors. The express purposes of the FDCPA are to "eliminate abusive debt collection practices by debt collectors, to insure that debt collectors who refrain from using abusive debt collection practices are not competitively disadvantaged, and to promote consistent State action to protect consumers against debt collection abuses." 15 U.S.C. § 1692e.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 15. At all relevant times, Defendant was attempting to collect an alleged consumer debt from Plaintiff as the term is defined by the FDCPA at 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5) and the RFDCPA at Cal. Civ. Code §1788.2(f).
- 16. The alleged debt at issue arose out of transactions, which were primarily for personal, family, or household purposes.
- 17. In or around June 2011, Defendant, by and through its representatives, commenced in efforts to collect an alleged debt from Plaintiff.
- 18. Plaintiff received telephone calls from (877) 551-9478; the undersigned has confirmed this number belongs to Defendant.
- 19. In a voice message left for Plaintiff on his cellular telephone in June 2011, Defendant's representative indicated to Plaintiff: "I am returning your phone calls"; however, this was false as Plaintiff had never contacted Defendant.

- 20. In this same voice message, Defendant's representative failed to meaningfully disclose her identity, nor did she state on whose behalf she was calling.
- 21. Defendant's representative also failed to disclose that she was a debt collector and that the purpose of the call was to collect a debt.
 - 22. The only information provided was a call back number and file number.
- 23. This was both confusing and deceptive to Plaintiff, who did not know who contacted him or that Defendant was a debt collector.

CONSTRUCTION OF APPLICABLE LAW

- 24. The FDCPA is a strict liability statute. <u>Taylor v. Perrin, Landry, deLaunay & Durand</u>, 103 F.3d 1232 (5th Cir. 1997). "Because the Act imposes strict liability, a consumer need not show intentional conduct by the debt collector to be entitled to damages." <u>Russell v. Equifax A.R.S.</u>, 74 F. 3d 30 (2d Cir. 1996); <u>see also Gearing v. Check Brokerage Corp.</u>, 233 F.3d 469 (7th Cir. 2000) (holding unintentional misrepresentation of debt collector's legal status violated FDCPA); <u>Clomon v. Jackson</u>, 988 F. 2d 1314 (2d Cir. 1993).
- 25. The FDCPA is a remedial statute, and therefore must be construed liberally in favor of the debtor. Sprinkle v. SB&C Ltd., 472 F. Supp. 2d 1235 (W.D. Wash. 2006). The remedial nature of the FDCPA requires that courts interpret it liberally. Clark v. Capital Credit & Collection Services, Inc., 460 F. 3d 1162 (9th Cir. 2006). "Because the FDCPA, like the Truth in Lending Act (TILA) 15 U.S.C §1601 et seq., is a remedial statute, it should be construed liberally in favor of the consumer." Johnson v. Riddle, 305 F. 3d 1107 (10th Cir. 2002).

26. The FDCPA is to be interpreted in accordance with the "least sophisticated" consumer standard. See Jeter v. Credit Bureau, Inc., 760 F.2d 1168 (11th Cir. 1985); Graziano v. Harrison, 950 F. 2d 107 (3rd Cir. 1991); Swanson v. Southern Oregon Credit Service, Inc., 869 F.2d 1222 (9th Cir. 1988). The FDCPA was not "made for the protection of experts, but for the public - that vast multitude which includes the ignorant, the unthinking, and the credulous, and the fact that a false statement may be obviously false to those who are trained and experienced does not change its character, nor take away its power to deceive others less experienced." Id. The least sophisticated consumer standard serves a dual purpose in that it ensures protection of all consumers, even naive and trusting, against deceptive collection practices, and protects collectors against liability for bizarre or idiosyncratic interpretations of collection notices. Clomon, 988 F. 2d at 1318.

COUNT I DEFENDANT VIOLATED THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT

- 27. Plaintiff reincorporates by reference all of the preceding paragraphs.
- 28. In its actions to collect a disputed debt, Defendant violated the FDCPA in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. Defendant violated of the FDCPA generally;
 - b. Defendant violated § 1692d of the FDCPA by harassing Plaintiff in connection with the collection of an alleged debt;
 - c. Defendant violated § 1602d(6) of the FDCPA by placing telephone calls to Plaintiff's home telephone without disclosure of the caller's identity;
 - d. Defendant violated § 1692e of the FDCPA by using false, deceptive, or

- misleading representations or means in connection with the collection of a debt;
- e. Defendant violated § 1692e(10) of the FDCPA by using false representations or deceptive means to collect or attempt to collect a debt;
- f. Defendant violated § 1692e(11) of the FDCPA by failing to disclose in the initial communication with Plaintiff that it was attempting to collect a debt and that any information obtained will be used for that purpose;
- g. Defendant violated § 1692f of the FDCPA by using unfair and unconscionable means with Plaintiff to collect or attempt to collect a debt; and
- h. Defendant acted in an otherwise deceptive, unfair and unconscionable manner and failed to comply with the FDCPA.

COUNT II DEFENDANT VIOLATED THE ROSENTHAL FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT

- 29. Plaintiff reincorporates by reference all of the preceding paragraphs.
- 30. In its actions to collect a disputed debt, Defendant violated the RFDCPA in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. Defendant violated Cal. Civ. Code §1788.11 by placing telephone calls to Plaintiff without disclosure of the caller's identity;
 - b. Defendant violated Cal. Civ. Code §1788.17, which mandates that every debt collector collecting or attempting to collect a consumer debt shall comply with the provisions of Sections 1692b to 1692j of the FDCPA inclusive.

1		
2	WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JAMES FRANCIS HENRY, respectfully pray for a judgment	
3	as follows:	
4	a. Actual Damages;	
5	b. Statutory damages;	
6	c. Reasonable attorney's fees and costs;	
7	d. Any other relief deemed appropriate by this Honorable Court.	
8		
9	DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL	
10	PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Plaintiff, JAMES FRANCIS HENRY, demands a jury	
11	trial in this case.	
12		
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14	RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,	
15	DATED: 07/07/11 KIMMEL & SILVERMAN, P.C	
16		
17	By: Amy L. Bennecoff (275805)	
18	Kimmel & Silverman, P. Silverm	
19	Ambler, PA 19002 Telephone: (215) 540-8888	
20	Facsimile (215) 540-8817	
21	Email: abennecoff@creditlaw.com	
22	Attorney for Plaintiff	
23		
24		
25		

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Case 2:11-cv-05964-GHK-VBK Document	Filed 07/20/11 Page 9 of 11 Page ID #:12					
Amy L. Bennecoff Kimmel & Silverman, P.C. 30 East Butler Pike Ambler, PA 19002 Telephone: 215-540-8888						
Facsimile: 215-540-8817						
	DISTRICT COURT CT OF CALIFORNIA					
JAMES FRANCIS HENRY CASE NUMBER						
PLAINTIFF(S) v. GC SERVICES, LP	CV11-05964JEM					
	SUMMONS					
DEFENDANT(S).						
must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached \(\mathbb{I} \)	12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer my L. Bennecoff, whose address is er, PA 19002 If you fail to do so,					
JUL 2 0 2011 Dated:	Clerk, U.S. District Court JULIE PRADO SEAL By: Deputy Clerk (Seal of the Court)					
[Use 60 days if the defendant is the United States or a United Stat 60 days by Rule 12(a)(3)].	es agency, or is an officer or employee of the United States. Allowed					
CV-01A (12/07) SUM	IMONS					
SUN	UNACTIO					

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

I (a) PLAINTIFFS (Check box if you are representing yourself □) JAMES FRANCIS HENRY				TTS ICES, LP					
yourself, provide same.)	ress and Telephone Number. If you are		Attorneys (If	Known)					
II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION	(Place an X in one box only.)	III. CITIZEN	SHIP OF PR	INCIPAL PART for plaintiff and or	TES - F	or Diversity Cases (fendant.)	Only		
□ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	✓ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)	Citizen of Thi	s State	PTF □ 1	DEF □ 1	Incorporated or Pr of Business in this		PTF □ 4	DEF □ 4
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	Citizen of Another State			□2	of Business in Another State			□ 5	
		Citizen or Sub	ject of a Foreig	gn Country 3	□ 3	Foreign Nation		□6	□6
IV. ORIGIN (Place an X in one 1 Original □ 2 Removed Proceeding State Cor	d from □ 3 Remanded from □ 4 R	Reinstated or C	5 Transferred	l from another dis	trict (sp	ecify): □ 6 Multi Distri Litigz	ict Judg	e from	
V. REQUESTED IN COMPLA	AINT: JURY DEMAND: Yes	□ No (Check 'Y	es' only if dem	anded in complai	nt.)				
CLASS ACTION under F.R.C.	P. 23: ☐ Yes 🗹 No		MONEY DE	MANDED IN C	OMPLA	AINT: \$			
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION (Cite	the U.S. Civil Statute under which you	ı are filing and v	rite a brief stat	ement of cause.	Do not c	ite jurisdictional sta	tutes unless div	ersity.))
VII. NATURE OF SUIT (Place	e an X in one box only.)								
□ 410 Antitrust □ 430 Banks and Banking □ 450 Commerce/ICC Rates/etc. □ 460 Deportation □ 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations □ 480 Consumer Credit □ 490 Cable/Sat TV □ 810 Selective Service □ 850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange □ 875 Customer Challenge 12 USC 3410 □ 890 Other Statutory Actions □ 891 Agricultural Act □ 892 Economic Stabilization Act □ 893 Environmental Matters □ 894 Energy Allocation Act □ 895 Freedom of Info. Act	□ 110 Insurance PR □ 120 Marine □ 31 □ 130 Miller Act □ 31 □ 140 Negotiable Instrument □ 32 □ 150 Recovery of □ 32 Overpayment & □ 34 □ 151 Medicare Act □ 34 □ 152 Recovery of Defaulted □ 34 Student Loan (Excl. □ 35 ∨eterans) □ 35 □ 153 Recovery of □ 36 Overpayment of ∨eteran's Benefits □ 36 □ 160 Stockholders' Suits □ 36 □ 190 Other Contract □ 36 □ 190 Other Contract □ 36 □ 195 Contract Product □ 36 □ 196 Franchise □ 36 □ 196 Franchise □ 36 □ 210 Land Condemnation □ 36 □ 220 Foreclosure □ 36 □ 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment □ 46 □ 240 Tort Product Liability □ 46 <td>TORTS ERSONAL INJU O Airplane 5 Airplane Prod Liability O Assault, Libe Slander O Fed. Employe Liability Marine S Marine Produ Liability Motor Vehicl Product Liab Other Person Injury Personal Injur Product Liab Resonal Injur Product Liab Reso</td> <td> P P P P P P P P P P</td> <td>TORIS ERSONAL ROPERTY Other Fraud Truth in Lending Other Personal Property Damage Property Damage Product Liability NKRUPTCY Appeal 28 USC 158 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 VIL RIGHTS VOTING Employment Housing/Accommodations Welfare American with Disabilities - Employment American with Disabilities - Other Other Civil Rights</td> <td>□ 510 □ 530 □ 535 □ 540 □ 555 □ 560 □ 625 □ 625 □ 630 □ 640 □ 650 □ 660</td> <td>Mandamus/ Other Civil Rights Prison Condition ORFEITURE / PENALTY Agriculture Other Food & Drug Drug Related Seizure of</td> <td> TAB TAB</td> <td>bor Statement St</td> <td>ct or Act or Act C. HTS 923) VI SUITS Plaintiff)</td>	TORTS ERSONAL INJU O Airplane 5 Airplane Prod Liability O Assault, Libe Slander O Fed. Employe Liability Marine S Marine Produ Liability Motor Vehicl Product Liab Other Person Injury Personal Injur Product Liab Resonal Injur Product Liab Reso	P P P P P P P P P P	TORIS ERSONAL ROPERTY Other Fraud Truth in Lending Other Personal Property Damage Property Damage Product Liability NKRUPTCY Appeal 28 USC 158 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 VIL RIGHTS VOTING Employment Housing/Accommodations Welfare American with Disabilities - Employment American with Disabilities - Other Other Civil Rights	□ 510 □ 530 □ 535 □ 540 □ 555 □ 560 □ 625 □ 625 □ 630 □ 640 □ 650 □ 660	Mandamus/ Other Civil Rights Prison Condition ORFEITURE / PENALTY Agriculture Other Food & Drug Drug Related Seizure of	TAB TAB	bor Statement St	ct or Act or Act C. HTS 923) VI SUITS Plaintiff)
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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:	Case Number:	DE EODM CV	1 COMPLE	PE THE INEOD	MATIC		PELOW		

CV-71 (05/08)

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

VIII(a). IDENTICAL CASES: If yes, list case number(s):	Has this action been pr	eviously filed in this court and dismissed, remanded or closed? No Ves					
VIII(b). RELATED CASES: Fif yes, list case number(s)	dave any cases been pro	viously filed in this court that are related to the present case? MNo 🖂 Yes	on continuous distributique ess as				
0	A. Arise from the samB. Call for determinatC. For other reasons v	te and the present case: c or closely related transactions, happenings, or events; or on of the same or substantially related or similar questions of law and fact, or ould entail substantial duplication of labor if heard by different judges; or itent, trademark or copyright, <u>and</u> one of the factors identified above in a, b or c also is present.					
IX. VENUE: (When completing	the following information	ion, use an additional sheet if necessary.)					
(a) List the County in this Distri Check here if the government	ict; Califòrnia County o nt, its agencies or empl	utside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named plaintiff resides byces is a named plaintiff. If this box is checked, go to item (b).					
County in this District:*		California County outside of this District; State, if other than California, or Foreign County	try				
Los Angeles							
(b) List the County in this District Check here if the government	ict; California County of nt. its agencies or empl	utside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named defendant resides syees is a named defendant. If this box is checked, go to item (c).	***************************************				
County in this District:*		California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Coun	try				
		Texas					
(c) List the County in this Distri Note: In land condemnatio	ict; California County on cases, use the locati	utside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH claim arose.	elitika er vilytharina anja a a anja				
County in this District *			California County outside of this District, State, if other than California, or Foreign Country				
Los Angeles							
* Los Angeles, Orange, San Ber Note In land condemnation cases	mardino, Riverside, V	cuturn, Santa Barbara, or Sim Luis Obispo Counties					
X SIGNATURE OF ATTORNE	Y (OR PRO PER): X	Date July 19, 2011					
or other papers as required by	/ law. This form, appro	ivil Cover Sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadneed by the Judicial conference of the United States in September 1974, is required pursuant to Local Rule 3-1 is not for of statutics, venue and initiating the civil docket sheet. (For more detailed instructions, see separate instructions she	. Lazt				
Key to Statistical codes relating to	Social Security Cases		dec 20-000-00/10/00/10/00				
Nature of Suit Co	de Abbreviation	Substantive Statement of Cause of Action					
861	HIA	All claims for health insurance benefits (Medicare) under Title 18, Part A, of the Social Security Act, as amende Also, include claims by hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, etc., for certification as providers of services under the program. (42 U.S.C. 1935FF(b))	d. he				
862	BL	All claims for "Black Lung" benefits under Title 4, Part B, of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 19 (30 U.S.C. 923)	069.				
863	DIWC	All claims filed by insured workers for disability insurance benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended; plus all claims filed for child's insurance benefits based on disability. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))					
863	DIWW	All claims filed for widows or widowers insurance benefits based on disability under Title 2 of the Social Securi Act, as amended. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))	ţy				
864	SSID	All claims for supplemental security income payments based upon disability filed under Title 16 of the Social Se Act, as amended.	curity				
865	RSI	All claims for retirement (old age) and survivors benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (U.S.C (g))	42				

CV-71 (05/08)